



2006–2007

Saskatchewan

Provincial Budget

Performance Plan

Saskatchewan Government Relations

Ministers' Message

We are pleased to present Saskatchewan Government Relations' 2006-07 Performance Plan. This report outlines our ongoing commitment to work together to enrich the lives of people throughout Saskatchewan, and help them reach their full potential.

The 2006-07 Plan continues to build on the goals and objectives of a department with three main areas of responsibility: the Provincial Secretary, Intergovernmental Relations, and Municipal Relations. Many of the key activities in this plan are well underway and guide the strategic direction of the Department.

We remain committed to celebrating excellence and paying tribute to outstanding individuals in our province through the Honours and Awards Program. Under this program, we will continue to bestow honours and awards on individuals who are making Saskatchewan a better place to live, work and raise a family.

The Department will also continue its work on an international level: we will pursue the objectives of the Province's new Action Plan on the Economy through active participation in Canada's trade negotiations and dispute settlement agenda, and through strategically positioning the provincial government in and with priority countries.

In other areas, we will focus on enhancing the services offered to our Francophone community through the implementation of the Saskatchewan French-language Services Policy this year. These guidelines will serve as a toolkit for departments, Crown corporations and agencies to assist them in enhancing and increasing French-language services provided to the Francophone community.

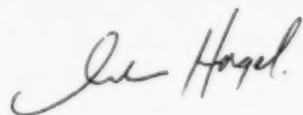
We recognize that as we begin our second century as a province, we need to concentrate on addressing critical municipal funding needs. The government has recently committed to a significant increase in municipal funding. In 2005-06, the government provided a one-time supplementary payment of \$12.2 million to top up in revenue sharing and \$32 million under the Community Share 2006 Program for capital projects. Starting in 2006-07, revenue sharing will increase by \$12.2 million, for a total of \$97.3 million in annual unconditional funding.

The government has recently committed to providing long-term, sustainable education property tax relief for agricultural land. Starting in 2006-07, an additional \$52.8 million will be provided in education property tax relief for agricultural land. This is in addition to the \$55 million that will be provided in education property tax relief for all ratepayers. For agricultural land, this will result in a 38 per cent reduction in education property tax and will establish an average provincial 60/40 province/local education funding split for agricultural land. The government will continue to negotiate with the federal government to address Saskatchewan's outstanding concerns with the federal equalization program, and as these and other resources permit, long-term sustainable education property tax relief for all ratepayers will become available.

These are just a few of the many actions planned by Government Relations in the upcoming fiscal year. We are committed to completing the key actions identified in our plan and reporting on our progress. We look forward to working with our stakeholders in addressing the challenges and the opportunities that 2006-07 will bring us.



Harry Van Mulligen
Minister of Government Relations



Glenn Hagel
Provincial Secretary

Who We Are

The mandate of the Department is to promote Saskatchewan's interests through management of the Province's relations with other governments in Canada and abroad. The Department works in partnership with communities to support local governance, provide financial and technical support and develop legislation, regulations and other policies to meet the changing needs of municipal governments. The Department also co-ordinates and manages matters related to Government House, French-language services, official protocol, provincial honours, and provides administrative services to the Office of the Lieutenant Governor.

Government Relations employs approximately 170 people, with offices in Regina, Saskatoon, La Ronge and Buffalo Narrows, and is comprised of three divisions; Intergovernmental Relations, Municipal Relations, and the Provincial Secretary. These divisions work collectively, in an integrated fashion, to fulfill the Department's mandate through delivery of a variety of programs and services.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Intergovernmental Relations has both a Canadian focus, namely the management of federal, provincial and interprovincial relations, and an international focus, including trade policy and international relations.

The Office of French-language Co-ordination (OFLC) facilitates the liaison between the provincial government and the Francophone community of Saskatchewan by supporting departments, Crown corporations and agencies with a view to improving French-language services in the Province; by guiding and monitoring the implementation of the Government of Saskatchewan French-language Services Policy, by co-ordinating intragovernmental French-language initiatives and by providing quality translation services. As well, the OFLC provides the Francophone community with a point of access to the provincial government.

Canadian Intergovernmental Relations advance Saskatchewan's economic, social and constitutional interests through the strategic management of intergovernmental partnerships within Canada. The trade policy function develops and advances Saskatchewan's objectives in domestic and international trade (market access) negotiations and disputes, while the international relations function co-ordinates the strategic management of provincial interests abroad.

The primary partners for these functions, both domestic and international, are other Canadian governments and organizations involved in managing the intergovernmental dimensions of these files.

MUNICIPAL RELATIONS

The Department assists 13 cities and 469 other urban municipalities, 296 rural municipalities and 24 northern municipalities in fulfilling their obligations to their residents. This support is provided under six lines of business – financial programs, governance, human capacity, regulatory, relationship management and policy. The Department works with the municipal sector to develop programs, services, legislation, regulations and policies that build good local government and define and protect public interests in Saskatchewan's system of local government. The Department is also responsible for municipal administration and operations in the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District.

Key partners include municipal councils and administrators, municipal associations, community planners and property assessment appraisers. The Department works closely with other provincial departments and in consultation with other provinces and territories and the federal government in carrying out its responsibilities.

The performance results are reliant on the municipal sector's compliance with provincial legislation and program funding requirements and accountability to the public and the provincial government. The municipalities are accountable to the provincial government regarding the use of the funding they receive from provincial government programs and from programs established by federal/provincial agreements that are administered by the provincial government. They are accountable to the public and the government for complying with provincial legislation requirements and accountable to the public to provide good local governance. The legislation balances local autonomy with accountability. The municipal audited financial statements are one tool for achieving accountability by showing the public and the government how municipal funds are spent. Public access to assessment data for property tax purposes is another form of accountability.

The Department is accountable to the municipal sector by ensuring full consultation prior to making government decisions that impact municipalities.

Government Relations is also a key department involved in the cross-government Safe Drinking Water Strategy. Additional information regarding this strategy can be found at www.se.gov.sk.ca.

PROVINCIAL SECRETARY

Provincial Secretary includes the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, the Office of Protocol and Honours and Government House Museum and Heritage Property.

The Office of Protocol and Honours is responsible for official visits, functions and symbols, the Legislative Building art collection and the provincial Honours and Awards Program which recognizes the contributions of our citizens to the well-being of Saskatchewan people. The program comprises the Saskatchewan Order of Merit, the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal, the Saskatchewan Protective Services Medal, the Saskatchewan Distinguished Services Award, the

Premier's Award for Excellence in the Public Service and the Saskatchewan Youth Award. Information on the provincial Honours and Awards Program can be found at www.gr.gov.sk.ca/protocol.

Government House is a key museum and provincial heritage property whose mandate is to provide educational programs to schools and the community-at-large, tourism opportunities, a government hospitality facility, and the Office of the Lieutenant Governor.

Offices within Provincial Secretary interact routinely with members of the public and with organizations sharing an interest in Saskatchewan's heritage, culture, and the promotion of the accomplishments of our people.

Plan at a Glance

This performance plan reflects the strategic decisions required to guide the Department of Government Relations. It will continue to evolve as the strategic planning, performance management and public reporting processes mature and stakeholder feedback is incorporated.

The goals and objectives identified in the plan are multi-year in nature. The Department will work toward achieving its objectives in support of meeting broader long-term goals. For each objective, a series of key actions for the 2006-07 fiscal year has been developed to outline how progress will be made in meeting the objective. In addition, a set of performance measures has been included that will also assist in gauging progress toward achieving the objectives.

Following is a summary of the Department's Performance Plan for 2006-07 and beyond. The goals and objectives articulate the outcomes the Department is pursuing in support of its vision. As part of our 2006-07 Annual Report, we will report on actual compared to planned progress in July 2007.

VISION

The citizenship of Saskatchewan people is enriched by:

- creating and maintaining respectful, responsive and effective partnerships between governments in Saskatchewan, Canada and abroad; and
- celebrating our heritage and honouring our achievements.

GOAL 1

Canada's constitutionally recognized communities and people are acknowledged, respected and supported within our Province and federation

OBJECTIVE 1 – *Enhance the delivery of French-language services in Saskatchewan in sectors important to Saskatchewan's Francophone community*

Performance Measures

- Per cent of survey respondents indicating they are familiar with the Office of French-language Co-ordination (OFLC) and the services it offers
- Per cent of survey respondents indicating that they are satisfied with the quality of service(s) they receive from the OFLC

GOAL 2

Saskatchewan's social, economic, and constitutional interests are advanced, and its values are recognized and reflected, within a strong, united Canadian federation and within the international community

OBJECTIVE 1 – *Saskatchewan makes maximum use of intergovernmental instruments and fora to ensure that developments within Canadian federalism: are respectful of the constitution; enable the Province to fulfill its responsibilities to citizens; and advance provincial policy priorities and interests*

Performance Measures

- Under development

OBJECTIVE 2 – *Market access for Saskatchewan's exports is increased in a manner consistent with the Government's economic, social, environmental and Aboriginal development policies/strategies*

Performance Measures

- Under development

GOAL 3

Respectful, effective municipal/provincial relationships that strengthen the quality of local governance for the benefit of Saskatchewan residents

OBJECTIVE 1 – *Department services and provincial funding that strategically assist municipal governments in governing and meeting the needs of their residents*

Performance Measures

- Number and per cent of municipalities whose financial reporting statements are compliant with Public Sector Accounting Board standards, filed on time and electronically
- Number and percentage of municipalities with planning bylaws in place

OBJECTIVE 2 – *A respectful and positive relationship between the provincial government and municipal partners and other interest groups*

Performance Measures

- Under development

OBJECTIVE 3 – *A legislative framework that provides clear municipal and provincial responsibilities, and balances local autonomy with provincial and public interests*

Performance Measures

- Under development

OBJECTIVE 4 – *A property tax system that is fair, transparent and understandable and reflects provincial interests*

Performance Measure

- Per cent of people who have full access to detailed property tax assessment data without having to file an appeal (subject to confidentiality legislation that protects personal information)

GOAL 4

*Saskatchewan's identity, heritage and the achievements of our people
are honoured, promoted and celebrated*

OBJECTIVE 1 – *The Province's recognition programs and symbols are reflective of our Province's diversity*

Performance Measures

- Proportion of Aboriginal people, women and rural/small urban (including northerners) in Honours and Awards nominations
- The Premier's Award for Excellence in the Public Service
 - ~ Number of nominations received
 - ~ Number of departments represented in nominations
- The Saskatchewan Protective Services Medal
 - ~ Number of nominations received
 - ~ Number of eligible agencies represented in nominations

OBJECTIVE 2 – *Government House Museum and Heritage Property is a preferred historic destination
in Saskatchewan*

Performance Measure

- Awareness of Government House Museum and Heritage Property

2006-07 Financial Overview

The Department of Government Relations is composed of three distinct divisions: Municipal Relations, Intergovernmental Relations, and the Provincial Secretary. While each division focuses on specific priorities, the work of each division also complements priorities in other divisions.

In 2006-07, total budgeted expenditures for the Department are \$199.4 million. Over \$183.0 million of this amount is required to provide financial assistance to municipalities.

The following table outlines departmental spending by function:

2006-07 ESTIMATES	<i>(thousands of dollars)</i>
Central Management and Services	\$ 5,004
Intergovernmental Relations	2,704
Municipal Financial Assistance	153,009
Municipal Relations	5,263
Provincial Secretary	2,058
Saskatchewan Municipal Board	1,137
New Deal for Cities and Communities	30,229
Total Appropriation	\$ 199,404
Capital Acquisitions	-
Amortization	3
Total Expense	\$ 199,407
REVENUES	\$ 46,364
FTE Staff Complement	166.7

The total increase in funding in 2006-07 is primarily the result of an increase in revenue sharing and the New Deal for Cities and Communities.

Total estimated revenue for 2006-07 is \$46.4 million. The majority of this amount relates to federal transfers under the New Deal and federal-provincial cost-share agreements, such as the Canada-Saskatchewan Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (C-SMRIF).

Trends and Issues

Government Relations operates in an environment based on relationships with governments, organizations and communities. These relationships provide opportunities to further Saskatchewan's interests in social, environmental, economic and cultural arenas. We are responsible for administering numerous programs and services within a continually changing environment. This section outlines some of the key external issues we face. Our performance plan includes key actions that outline the specific ways we will work to overcome the challenges that these issues present. As well, our performance measures have been developed to measure our progress in this regard.

GLOBAL/INTERNATIONAL

Saskatchewan's development prospects continue to be directly affected by such global/international trends as:

- the evolving patterns of international economic integration, or globalization;
- the related regionalization of the global economy, and Canada's response to it in the form of new policies and programs dealing with the North American economic space, (e.g., the trilateral *Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America*) 'emerging' markets such as Brazil, Russia, India and China, and 'mature' markets such as the European Union, Japan and South Korea;
- the recent U.S. practice of 'competitive liberalization' (i.e., the signing of multiple bilateral free trade agreements), which may 'dilute' Canada's preferential access to the U.S. market and induce Canada to follow suit around the world;
- the advent of international terrorism, and the affects on the Province of security-related responses to it; and
- the growth and international dispersion of information and communications technology (ICT), which is profoundly impacting the 'tradeability' of service industries and increasing citizens' ability to participate in political decision-making and government service delivery.

NATIONAL

The intergovernmental landscape has changed recently with the election of the minority Conservative Government at the national level. Initial indications are that the Conservative Government's approach to governance within the federation, as well as its policy priorities, federal/provincial relations agenda and even the policy instruments that it might pursue to achieve broad objectives, will be significantly different than with the previous Liberal Government.

As a consequence, intergovernmental sanction (support of Premiers) through the Council of the Federation may become more important in terms of legitimizing federal positions on key issues such as fiscal relations, business risk management programs for farmers and a range of social policy matters.

If substantially retained by the new federal government, Canada's new *International Policy Statement, A Role of Pride and Influence in the World* is likely to significantly influence how the Province formulates and advances its international (including trade) interests in the future.

It is unknown at this time what the municipal agenda will be for the newly formed federal government. A new federal department of Transportation, Infrastructure and Communities has been created. The former federal government had developed a municipal agenda that included a "New Deal for Cities and Communities." The New Deal included new federal money for municipalities, new relationships and partnerships involving the three levels of government and new ways of making decisions federally with respect to municipalities. The provincial government has signed a New Deal agreement with the former federal government that will transfer \$147.7 million in federal gas tax revenues to Saskatchewan municipalities over five years (2005-06 to 2009-10). There are also in place the Canada-Saskatchewan Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund and the Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund. We expect that the new federal government will honour these existing agreements. The new federal government may have an interest in a municipal agenda. Efforts will need to be made to ensure discussions by the new federal government, with the municipal sector, include the provincial government to ensure provincial interests are protected.

A new federal government was elected in January 2006 and made some changes in the administrative structure of Francophone Affairs. The Department of La Francophonie and Official Languages was created and is generally seen as a positive sign of commitment from the new government towards Canada's linguistic duality. Also, the Francophone Secretariat was established within Canadian Heritage.

New action plans at the federal and interprovincial/territorial levels in Francophone affairs are also creating opportunities for regional and intergovernmental initiatives with a view to providing better services to the Francophone population. Saskatchewan is now one of nine provinces and territories to have legislation or policies in place with regard to French-language services.

PROVINCIAL

Saskatchewan's new Action Plan for the Economy, *A New Century of Opportunity*, must now inform the Department's trade policy and international relations agendas.

Municipalities are responsible for fulfilling their service and accountability obligations to their residents. Basic services, including water and sewer, solid waste disposal, fire protection, police protection and land use planning contribute to community development. Changing demographics and social and economic conditions challenge the capacity of communities to meet public

expectations and needs and provide basic municipal services. Saskatchewan residents continue to move from towns, villages and rural municipalities to the cities. A number of communities in northern Saskatchewan continue to grow. There are a growing number of seniors and people of Aboriginal ancestry in the Province with an out-migration of young adults. There are proportionately more seniors living in towns, villages and rural municipalities than there are in cities. The creation of Treaty Land Entitlement reserves and inner-city issues are creating new conditions for municipalities to manage. Within this environment, the Department is working with the municipal sector to develop initiatives that will address municipal capacity and service issues.

The provincial government recently announced a significant increase in municipal funding. For revenue sharing, a one-time supplementary payment of \$12.2 million was provided in 2005-06, with an incremental \$12.2 million, added to the base, to be provided in 2006-07, for a total of \$97.3 million annually. Also, in 2005-06, \$32 million in unconditional funding was provided to municipalities for capital projects under the Community Share 2006 Program. The municipal sector has indicated its appreciation for the new funding, but it continues to indicate the need for a further increase in long-term funding under revenue sharing, with a funding formula.

The government has recently committed to providing long-term, sustainable education property tax relief for agricultural land. Beginning in 2006-07, \$52.8 million more will be provided in education property tax relief for agricultural land. This is in addition to the \$55 million to be provided in education property tax relief for all ratepayers. For agricultural land, this will result in a 38 per cent reduction in education property tax, with an average province/local education funding split of 60/40 on a province-wide basis.

The city mayors and the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA) are calling for a provincial urban agenda that addresses urban issues and priorities. The provincial government has indicated it is interested in working with the municipal sector on an urban agenda.

Saskatchewan's centennial celebrations were an opportunity to celebrate our past. Through emblems, honours and awards programs, the newly expanded Government House and visits by members of the Royal Family, our Province continues to commemorate the heritage, the identity and the accomplishments of our people.

Changes from 2005-06 Performance Plan

Effective April 1, 2006, the Immigration Branch within the Department of Government Relations became part of the new Department of Advanced Education and Employment. The 2006-07 plan has been adjusted to reflect this change. The fundamental elements (goals, objectives and performance measures) for the remainder of the Department are the same as those included in Government Relations' 2005-06 plan, with the exception of Objective 2 under Goal 4, which has been amended to eliminate reference to the Province's Centennial; as well as the performance measure related to Objective 2 under Goal 3, which has been eliminated in light of its limited usefulness.

Goals, Objectives, Actions and Measures

This section identifies where the Department is headed through a description of its goals and objectives for 2006-07 and beyond. Key actions that will be undertaken by the Department in 2006-07 to achieve its objectives are also listed. Finally, performance measures are included in order to gauge the Department's progress in advancing its objectives.

The Department's programs that provide funding for municipal infrastructure have an impact on both our performance and financial results. In particular, funding is required for the Canada-Saskatchewan Infrastructure Program (CSIP), and the Canada-Saskatchewan Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (C-SMRIF). These programs provide federal and provincial financial assistance to urban, rural and northern municipalities for construction of high priority infrastructure projects, such as water and waste water systems, water management, solid waste management, recycling, improving the energy efficiency of buildings and facilities owned by local governments, and roads and bridges. In addition, the Department flows federal funding through to municipalities under the New Deal for Cities and Communities. The actual funding spent each year depends on the progress of the projects undertaken by the municipalities. This impacts program results, as the number of projects undertaken by the municipalities and the progress of the projects can be less than what is approved under the program.

GOAL 1

Canada's constitutionally recognized communities and people are acknowledged, respected and supported within our Province and federation

OBJECTIVE 1 – Enhance the delivery of French-language services in Saskatchewan in sectors important to Saskatchewan's Francophone community

The Government of Saskatchewan French-language Services Policy, adopted in September 2003, states the provincial government's commitment to enhance French-language services and sets out goals with respect to communication, service delivery and development, and consultation with the Francophone community. The Fransaskois community has a blueprint for community development called the Plan de développement global (PDG). The PDG is a comprehensive development plan that outlines a vision, mission, values, operational sectors, activity sectors and desired outcomes. The eight priority activity sectors are: arts, culture and heritage; communications; economic development; education; home and spirituality; politics and law; health; and sports and recreation.

Key Actions for 2006-07

- Implement the Government of Saskatchewan French-language Services Policy by consulting and collaborating with departments, Crown corporations and agencies, through regular meetings of the Office of French-language Co-ordination (OFLC) Intragovernmental Liaison Network, to establish a workable timeframe and to apply the implementation guidelines.
- Prepare the annual report detailing progress in achieving the service goals as set out in the French-language Services Policy.
- Maintain effective consultation between the Government of Saskatchewan and the Fransaskois community through quarterly meetings of the Provincial Government-Francophone Community Joint Liaison Committee on French-language Services and through regular meetings with key Francophone sectoral organizations.
- Act as a liaison between the Francophone community and government departments, Crown corporations and agencies to facilitate constructive collaboration and partnerships with a view to achieving the service goals as outlined in the French-language Services Policy.
- Collaborate with federal, provincial and territorial counterparts on establishing mechanisms to facilitate joint/multilateral French-language services initiatives, including Saskatchewan participation at the Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie.
- Ensure effective use of funding provided under a renewed Canada-Saskatchewan Agreement on French-language Services (2005-06 to 2008-09).

What are we measuring?

Per cent of survey respondents indicating that they are familiar with the OFLC and the services it offers (broken down by stakeholder group)

Where are we starting from?

Federal government: 100%
Provincial government: 98%
Francophone community: 89%
[January 2005]

This data is linked to the objective because the effectiveness of OFLC's work as a central co-ordinating agency is key to enhancing the delivery of French-language services in the Province. In order for the OFLC to be effective in its role to guide and monitor the application of the Government of Saskatchewan French-language Services Policy, all stakeholders must first be aware of and understand the OFLC's function. The data is easily accessible, affordable and relevant.

The OFLC interacts on a regular basis with three sets of key stakeholders: Fransaskois community organizations, provincial civil servants, and federal employees in Saskatchewan. The OFLC works with provincial departments and agencies and the Fransaskois community to align opportunities for service enhancement with identified needs. The OFLC also pursues opportunities with federal counterparts, given that the federal government remains an important partner for French-language initiatives in the Province.

The survey was sent to 93 provincial government employees, of whom 51 per cent responded, 108 Francophone community employees and elected representatives, of whom 18 per cent responded and 26 federal government employees, of whom 27 per cent responded.

What are we measuring?

Per cent of survey respondents indicating that they are satisfied with the quality of service(s) they receive from the OFLC (broken down by stakeholder group)

Where are we starting from?

Federal government: 71%
Provincial government: 91%
Francophone community: 74%
[January 2005]

This data represents another element needed for the OFLC to be effective in its central, co-ordinating role. Stakeholders must see OFLC involvement as value-added and this can be measured by their level of satisfaction with the services provided. This data is easily accessible, affordable and relevant.

The survey was sent to 93 provincial government employees, of whom 51 per cent responded, 108 Francophone community employees and elected representatives, of whom 18 per cent responded and 26 federal government employees, of whom 27 per cent responded.

GOAL 2

Saskatchewan's social, economic, and constitutional interests are advanced, and its values are recognized and reflected, within a strong, united Canadian federation and within the international community

OBJECTIVE 1 – *Saskatchewan makes maximum use of intergovernmental instruments and fora to ensure that developments within Canadian federalism: are respectful of the constitution; enable the Province to fulfill its responsibilities to citizens; and advance provincial policy priorities and interests*

Within the federation, the actions and policies of the federal government, and other governments, impact on Saskatchewan. It is important that Saskatchewan manage its intergovernmental relations in a fashion that impacts positively on these actions and policies, while at the same time supporting provincial interests and objectives, and minimizing risks and costs to the Province.

Key actions are focused on those issues that currently have the greatest potential for shaping developments within Canadian federalism. The ability of the Department to achieve this objective is limited by political interests and mandates of other governments, the state of relations between governments, Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) decisions, the economic and fiscal environment(s), the Department's ability to establish effective interest-based relationships with other governments, and decision-makers and available resources.

Key Actions for 2006-07

- Provide strategic intergovernmental advice and support, to advance Saskatchewan's priorities and interests through the following actions:
 - ~ monitoring the implementation of outcomes from the First Ministers' Meeting on Aboriginal Issues;
 - ~ monitoring the implementation of the "10-Year Plan to Strengthen Health Care" and the Aboriginal Health Blueprint; and
 - ~ monitoring the implementation of an interim Equalization formula for 2004-05 and 2005-06 and the development and implementation of a new Equalization formula.
- Leading or participating in intergovernmental fora in the development of consensus-based strategic positions on the following initiatives sponsored by Premiers through the Council of the Federation, or Western Premiers' Conference:
 - ~ Prevention and Treatment Strategies for Crystal Methamphetamine;
 - ~ Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training;
 - ~ National Transportation Strategy;
 - ~ National Energy Strategy; and
 - ~ Western Canadian Aboriginal Training Strategy.

- Work with lead departments and agencies in the development of Saskatchewan's strategic policy positions associated with a range of economic, human resource and sustainable development initiatives flowing from the federal Throne Speech, federal budget documents, or other federal policy pronouncements, as well as Council of the Federation or Western Premiers' Conference sponsored initiatives. For 2006-07, key areas of focus will include: climate change, regulatory reform, the Green Economy, services to Aboriginal people (i.e., Aboriginal Health Blueprint and Western Aboriginal Training Strategy) and the development of Saskatchewan's position respecting provincial/territorial pan-Canadian strategies for transportation/infrastructure, energy, post-secondary education and skills, crystal methamphetamine addiction, and agricultural business risk management programs.
- Staff and co-ordinate the preparation of briefing material for the Premier's participation in First Ministers' Meetings, Council of the Federation Meetings, The Western Premiers' Conference, The Western Governors' Association, and other bilateral meetings with federal, provincial and international counterparts.
- Advance the strategic international interests of the Province by:
 - ~ continuing to develop and implement a proactive positioning strategy for Saskatchewan in the U.S.;
 - ~ reviewing/revising the Province's intergovernmental relations with Ukraine;
 - ~ assisting departments, agencies and key stakeholders to articulate and implement their international objectives; and
 - ~ staffing the Premier on 'Team Saskatchewan' missions abroad.

What are we measuring?

Under development

Where are we starting from?

Under development

OBJECTIVE 2 – *Market access for Saskatchewan's exports is increased in a manner consistent with the Government's economic, social, environmental and Aboriginal development policies/strategies*

Saskatchewan is the second most trade-oriented province in Canada – in 2004, for example, the value of our exports of goods and services to Canada and abroad amounted to the equivalent of about 70 per cent of the Province's total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in real terms. By value, some 59 per cent of our exports was destined to international markets, and about 41 per cent went to other domestic Canadian markets in 2004 (Source: StatsCan Provincial Economic Accounts, November 2005).

As the Province's current economic development strategy, *Action Plan for the Economy*, recognizes, negotiating enhanced and secure access to other markets is essential to the Province's current and future economic performance. However, it is important that such access is also supportive of other provincial development objectives.

The ability of the Department to directly control the outcomes of such negotiations and/or disputes, and therefore to achieve this objective, is limited. Internationally, the Province is not at any of the negotiating tables and can, like the other 12 provincial/territorial governments in Canada, only advise our federal negotiators about Saskatchewan's interests. Domestically, Saskatchewan is one of 14 jurisdictions at the negotiating table.

Key Actions for 2006-07

Identify/achieve Saskatchewan's objectives in priority negotiating forums:

- International
 - ~ The World Trade Organization (WTO)
 - ~ The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)
 - ~ the Canada-South Korea Free Trade Agreement
 - ~ the Canada-E.U. Trade and Investment Enhancement Agreement and the evolving 'economic framework' discussions with China and Japan
- Domestic
 - ~ Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT)
- Successfully defend/advance Saskatchewan measures/interests in existing/future trade disputes affecting key provincial interests (e.g., softwood lumber, wheat, oilseeds).

What are we measuring?

Under development

Where are we starting from?

Under development

GOAL 3

Respectful, effective municipal/provincial relationships that strengthen the quality of local governance for the benefit of Saskatchewan residents

OBJECTIVE 1 – *Department services and provincial funding that strategically assist municipal governments in governing and meeting the needs of their residents*

Municipalities benefit from provincial advisory and professional assistance and funding in order to meet the needs of their residents. The Department works with the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM), the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA), the Rural Municipal Administrators Association of Saskatchewan (RMAAS), the Urban Municipal Administrators Association of Saskatchewan (UMAAS), and the New North-SANC (Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities) to build planning and administrative capacity in municipalities and provide funding to ensure provincial and public interests are protected.

The Department assists municipalities in the key areas of building municipal leadership and administrative skills, compliance with legislation, regulations and financial requirements, and developing community land use plans, zoning bylaws and subdivisions, and provides funding to address critical municipal infrastructure needs, such as water and sewer, and for municipal services.

Key Actions for 2006-07

- Provide \$97.3 million in revenue sharing to municipalities to assist them in providing services to their residents.
- Address critical municipal infrastructure needs through such programs as the Canada-Saskatchewan Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (C-SMRIF) and individual projects under the Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund. The C-SMRIF will provide \$38 million of provincial funding over four years to match federal funding, with participating communities contributing one-half of the project costs, for a total potential investment of \$152 million. For 2005-06 and 2006-07, under the C-SMRIF, 94 projects have been approved for \$13.5 million of provincial funding. The C-SMRIF supports the Drinking Water Strategy and water conservation.
- Address critical northern municipal infrastructure needs by:
 - ~ providing \$3 million under the Northern Water and Sewer Program and \$400,000 under the Northern Emergency Water and Sewer Repair Program and \$300,000 for engineering water and sewer advice to northern communities; and
 - ~ developing a long-term strategy to address northern water and sewer needs.
- Under the New Deal, allocate funding to municipalities, assist in municipal reporting requirements to the federal government and, if continued by the new federal government, participate in a federal/provincial/municipal committee to develop further areas of collaboration.
- Negotiate and implement a bilateral agreement with the federal government to provide \$25 million in federal public transit funding for municipalities.
- Implement the Regina and Saskatoon urban development agreements to address priority areas based on intergovernmental co-ordination.
- Continue to implement the Northern Revenue Sharing Trust Account strategic plan to address recommendations by the Provincial Auditor.
- Continue to implement and evaluate as a pilot project a Northern Advisory Planning Commission in the La Ronge area that is responsible for land use issues.
- Assist and support the Great Sand Hills Planning District Commission and affiliated municipalities to support the recommendations of the Great Sand Hills Land Use Strategy. Review and continue to participate in the Regional Environmental Study to ensure municipal interest are addressed.
- Continue to work with SaskWater and municipalities on watershed plan implementation to ensure that the commitments under the Safe Drinking Water Strategy are met and that municipalities establish provisions for source water protection.

- Assist municipalities in complying with legislation and regulations.
- Continue to work with municipalities to file financial statements that meet Public Sector Accounting Board standards on time and electronically.
- Build municipal capacity by enhancing municipal governance, planning and administration learning opportunities through:
 - ~ the municipal leadership development program; and
 - ~ providing planning, administrative and technical advice.
- Focus on providing services to municipal officials and the general public through web-based resources, including:
 - ~ on-line planning and advisory information;
 - ~ on-line regulatory reviews, and
 - ~ portals to other information and services.

What are we measuring?

Number and per cent of municipalities whose financial reporting statements are compliant with the Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB) standards, filed on time and electronically (broken down by southern and northern municipalities)

Where are we starting from?

Compliance with PSAB
 778 or 100% for southern
 9 or 38% for northern

Filed on time
 631 or 81% for southern
 8 or 33% for northern

Filed electronically
 0 or 0% for southern
 0 or 0% for northern

[2004; latest data available]

Financial information is to be compliant with PSAB standards. The Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants sets PSAB accounting standards for public sector financial reporting. The Provincial Auditor has repeatedly called for these standards. Filing information that meets the PSAB standards and is on time (by September 1 of the following year) contributes to timely municipal accountability and transparency to the ratepayers and good local government. Electronic information is more efficient. This information is also used by the Department to allocate funding to the municipalities. The Department monitors the financial information to ensure it is filed in accordance with the legislation, follows up on missing reports and assists the municipalities in filing the required information. Penalties can be applied if there is non-compliance. The Department has a significant level of influence over the results by assisting municipalities in completing the reports and applying penalties, if required.

What are we measuring?

Number and percentage of municipalities with planning bylaws in place

Where are we starting from?

475 out of 802 municipalities (59%)
[2005]

A community plan can provide a vision of goals, objectives and principles that can contribute to building a stronger community. While municipalities are not required to have community planning bylaws, effective planning can co-ordinate infrastructure and services, support accountability and transparency, encourage economic development and promote sustainable environmental resource management. The Department is responsible for promoting and overseeing community planning and development policies in Saskatchewan that facilitate economic opportunities through municipal and community development processes. Some municipalities may not have the capacity or resources to develop and administer municipal planning bylaws. The Department will be providing training sessions, workshops and guidance to municipalities on development and zoning issues.

OBJECTIVE 2 – *A respectful and positive relationship between the provincial government and municipal partners and other interest groups*

A respectful and positive relationship is required between the provincial government and its municipal partners, the federal government, and other interest groups to be able to work together in a collaborative manner to ensure that the needs of Saskatchewan residents are met. The Department works with SUMA, SARM, New North-SANC, the Provincial Association of Resort Communities (PARCS), RMAAS, UMAAS, the cities and other organizations to ensure mechanisms are in place for open communication.

Key Actions for 2006-07

- Work with the cities and SUMA to develop an urban agenda that supports urban municipal issues and priorities and provincial interests.
- Work with SARM under its Clearing the Path initiative on the development of sector specific planning committees and a primary weight road network to remove impediments to rural economic development.
- Continue to use the Municipal Forum for joint planning, consulting and collaborating with the municipal sector to advance key priorities involving the municipal sector and to ensure federal government discussions with the municipal sector are tripartite discussions that include the provincial government.
- Continue to use the revamped Northern Roundtable for joint planning, consulting and collaborating with northern municipalities to advance key priorities involving the municipal sector.
- Co-ordinate formal sessions of the Department-Municipal Steering Committee of Senior Executives to develop programs, services and partnerships.

- Continue to work with municipal partners to address municipal governance and administration issues.
- Consult with the municipal sector and other parties on legislation and regulations under development.

What are we measuring?

Under development

Where are we starting from?

Under development

The performance measure previously approved for this objective, "The level of satisfaction of municipal associations and larger cities with the Department," is being eliminated in light of its limited value and in relation to the significant cost to conduct the survey.

OBJECTIVE 3 – *A legislative framework that provides clear municipal and provincial responsibilities, and balances local autonomy with provincial and public interests*

For efficient and effective government, it is important that the roles and responsibilities of local governments and the provincial government are clearly defined in legislation, that local governments have the authority and flexibility to deal with local issues and that provincial involvement is removed where there is no overriding provincial interest. At the same time, local governments should be accountable and public interests must be protected. The Department consults with SARM, SUMA, RMAAS, UMAAS, New North-SANC, the cities and other organizations regarding legislative changes.

The ability of the Department to gauge progress in achieving this objective is limited by the policy-oriented nature of the objective. The Department is, however, continuing to work toward the development of an appropriate, meaningful and cost-effective performance measure in this respect.

Key Actions for 2006-07

- As part of phase 2 renewal of *The Planning and Development Act, 1983*, consult on and implement legislative changes to enable economic and community development, enhance planning tools for municipalities and opportunities for intermunicipal planning, identify provincial interests, and support initiatives, such as the Safe Drinking Water Strategy, New Deal and SARM's Clearing the Path.
- Review and amend *The Northern Municipalities Act* to modernize it. The overall goal for the review of the Act is to ensure that it meets the current and future needs of northern communities and citizens.
- Implement a new Lloydminster Charter that provides the city with natural person powers and spheres of jurisdiction and establishes public accountability requirements, similar to *The Cities Act*.
- Complete the review of the liability provisions in the three municipal Acts and introduce legislation and other changes to implement decisions.

OBJECTIVE 4 – *A property tax system that is fair, transparent and understandable and reflects provincial interests*

Each year, approximately \$1.2 billion is collected by municipalities in municipal and school property taxes. It is important that the property tax system is fair and that Saskatchewan people understand the property tax system and how their property taxes are determined. The Department works with SUMA, SARM, UMAAS, RMAAS, Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency (SAMA) and commercial and residential groups to ensure appropriate tax tools are available to the municipalities and to set percentages of value for revaluations, and to provide advice to Government on the funding, structure, transparency and accountability of SAMA.

The performance measure for this objective does not specifically measure fairness of the property tax system, how understandable it is and whether provincial interests are being achieved. Provincial, social and economic interests are achieved by implementing provincial government percentages of value for property classes. It is difficult to develop specific measurements of fairness and understandability of the property tax system that would be reasonably easy to implement and meaningful to the public.

Key Actions for 2006-07

- Work with Saskatchewan Learning, SAMA, municipalities and school boards to develop a long-term, sustainable financial plan for SAMA.
- Assist Saskatchewan Learning with the implementation of education property tax relief (\$55 million to all ratepayers and an additional \$52.8 million to agricultural property ratepayers).
- Continue to monitor local government property tax tools in conjunction with implementation of the 2005 revaluation and collaborate with the Department of Learning and other departments to develop recommendations regarding property tax tools.
- Amend the *Assessment Management Agency Act*, *The Cities Act* and *The Municipalities Act* in 2006 to facilitate the market value system with revaluation in 2009.
- Develop a new computer model to project property tax shifts arising from revaluations and analyze options for provincial property tax policy.

What are we measuring?

Per cent of people that have full access to detailed assessment data without having to file an appeal (subject to confidentiality legislation that protects personal information)

Where are we starting from?

18%
[2003 and 2004]

Currently, there are six assessment service providers serving municipalities across the Province. For 2001, none of the assessment service providers provided full public access to detailed assessment data (exception is the City of Regina which allowed access to residential information only). In 2002, due to Court of Queen's Bench and Board of Revision challenges, all data was made accessible once an appeal was launched.

With full access to the detailed assessment information, property tax payers can determine how the assessor calculated the fair value of their property. This is consistent with the principle of transparency. Transparency of information strengthens the property taxpayers' understanding of the assessing authorities' determination of their fair value assessment.

Property tax payers can use this information to determine whether their property was valued fairly and accurately and whether an appeal should be undertaken.

If public access to this information continues to be limited, legislative changes can be considered to require assessing authorities to provide public access to the detailed assessment information used to determine their fair value.

GOAL 4

*Saskatchewan's identity, heritage and the achievements of our people
are honoured, promoted and celebrated*

OBJECTIVE 1 – *The Province's recognition programs and symbols are reflective of our Province's diversity*

It is important to have recognition programs and symbols in our society. Symbols officially represent who we are as Saskatchewan residents and what our economy and society are about. Recognition programs are a way of bestowing public recognition on deserving citizens who contribute to the well-being of us all. Our recognition programs and symbols should be reflective of the diversity of our society.

Key Actions for 2006-07

- Co-ordinate, promote and manage the Saskatchewan Protective Services Medal.
- Actively promote, co-ordinate and manage the Premier's Award for Excellence in the Public Service (PAEPS) to all eligible departments and agencies.
- Implement the Saskatchewan Youth Award.

What are we measuring?

Proportion of Aboriginal people, women and rural/small urban (including northerners) in nominations for provincial honours and awards

Where are we starting from?

Aboriginal: 4.5%
Women: 34.5%
Rural/small urban: 33%
[March 31, 2005]

Our population is comprised of a number of diverse groups, among them Aboriginal people, and those in rural and small urban areas. 2001 statistics indicate that 54 per cent of Saskatchewan's population live in the 13 cities and 46 per cent live in smaller communities and rural Saskatchewan. (This urban/rural definition differs from that of the 2005-06 Performance Plan due to a variation in sources. The definition currently used is: Urban – 13 Saskatchewan cities with a population of 5,000 or greater; Rural – the remainder of Saskatchewan's population residing in towns, villages, resort villages, districts and hamlets.) By measuring the number of nominations received from these various groups for the Saskatchewan Order of Merit, and the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal, we will have an indication of how well these programs reflect the diversity in our population.

What are we measuring?

The Premier's Award for Excellence in the Public Service

- Number of nominations received
- Number of departments represented in nominations

Where are we starting from?

Fifteen team and individual nominations from nine departments/agencies, which includes over 110 Saskatchewan public servants nominated
[2004-05]

Our public servants come from a variety of backgrounds. By measuring the number of nominations received and the number of awards bestowed, we will have an indication of whether this program reflects the diversity of departments within the public service. In 2006-07 fiscal year, plans are to actively promote the award throughout Saskatchewan.

What are we measuring?

The Saskatchewan Protective Services Medal

- Number of nominations received
- Number of eligible agencies represented in nominations

Where are we starting from?

147 nominations
9 out of 11 eligible agencies submitted nominations
[2004-05]

Individuals who work in areas that protect Saskatchewan people and property come from a diverse population throughout the Province. By measuring the number of nominations received and the number of awards bestowed, we will have an indication of how this program reflects the diversity of agencies within the Province.

Eligible protective service agencies are:

- Fire service – career, volunteer, forest protection, airport, fire prevention
- Police service – RCMP, municipal, CN and CP, Wascana Centre, Legislative Assembly, agencies created under *The Saskatchewan Police Act*
- Canada Border Services Agency
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada
- Emergency Medical Services
- Canadian Forces – Regular Force, Primary Reserve, Canadian Rangers
- Saskatchewan Environment and Parks Canada – Conservation Officers
- Saskatchewan Corrections & Public Safety, Correctional Service of Canada
- Saskatchewan Highways & Transportation – Transport Compliance Branch
- Canadian Security & Intelligence Service
- Saskatchewan Justice – Sheriffs, Deputy Sheriffs and Investigators in the Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Unit

OBJECTIVE 2 – *Government House Museum and Heritage Property is a preferred historic destination in Saskatchewan*

Commemoration of historical information and artifacts is an important way to honour our past. Government House Museum and Heritage Property is a National Historic Site that had a significant role in shaping the political and social character of Western Canada as prairie west developed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Government House is a working museum that serves as a landmark and legacy for residents of Saskatchewan.

Key Actions for 2006-07

- Promote, market and celebrate Government House Museum and as a tourism destination point.
- Poll/survey Saskatchewan residents and tourists to ensure promotional materials are broad-based and educational.
- Promote the Government House Centennial Project addition as an important Saskatchewan legacy with expanded facilities for education, tourism and hospitality.
- Incorporate the new J.E.N. Wiebe Interpretive Centre into client experiences and promotional opportunities.
- Enhance Government House education programs by featuring the history of Canadian governance, the Crown, the role of the Lieutenant Governor and the history of treaties.
- Analyze the types of marketing vehicles that attract visitors and tourists to Government House Museum and Heritage Property.

What are we measuring?

Awareness of Government House
Museum and Heritage Property

Where are we starting from?

51%
[January 2002; latest data available]

This measure quantifies the number of survey respondents in a public opinion poll that indicate awareness of the Government House Museum and Heritage Property.

The centennial addition is already drawing considerable public attention to Government House Museum and Heritage Property and was a key Saskatchewan Centennial Project. The grand opening of the Government House Centennial Project by The Queen in May 2005 has enhanced Government House's visibility and profile.

For More Information

Additional information about Government Relations is available on the Department's website, and can be viewed on the Internet at: www.gr.gov.sk.ca.

The website includes both general and more detailed information about the Department and its programs and services.

For further information about GR or to provide feedback about the Department's Performance Plan for 2006-07, please contact us:

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